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strengthens the tendency towards cunning and duplicity (which safeguard the secrecy of the rain charms) and has given rise to the impression among Europeans that the Lovedu are cowardly and deceitful, lacking the manly qualities of their neighbours, the Shangana-Ṭonga. Foolish valour is discredited, for 'It is at the home of the coward that the porridge bowl is not thrown away': he lives to eat another day. The prestige of a queen as ruler also maintains the high status of women in a patrilineal society. Nowhere else are so many women heads of districts or in such important political positions. Women own cattle, have wives and may aspire to headship of large villages; and in the social system the main forces are oriented from the pivotal position of the cattle-linked sister. A wife or mother is queen of her establishment, as its old Khilovedu name, *mulago*, indicates: *hu laga* means to control like a leader, while *le lago* describes the excessive control of some overwatchful kraal heads.

Agriculture is not important as a field of achievement, for stores cannot be accumulated; immoderate success is suspect and a man cannot establish or alter his status by economic means. 'Yours is what you eat; what you set aside is another's', means both that expending energy upon accumulating goods is lack of balance and that the 'haves' cannot be ungenerous to the 'have-nots'. Nor is the royal complex of institutions, except in so far as it interpenetrates the social system, a field of achievement for ordinary men. It is the social system which, besides being one of the great pillars of security, provides the scheme in which man seeks self-expression and recognition. There are wide avenues of achievement for men, especially in the *khɔrɔ*, and women may aspire to influence within the *munywalo* complex and its 'houses'. There are other fields of achievement: men may find satisfaction in the circle of the huts of their wives, women in spirit possession, and both men and women may become doctors, district heads, craftsmen, or story-tellers, while the adventurous may seek expression in the fantasy of manipulating the forces of witchcraft.

But all these avenues are available only within the arrangements of the social structure, which on the whole are designed to eliminate competition and to reward co-operation. The activities of the *khɔrɔ*, in which men seek and display their highest self-expression, throw into bold relief the qualities and traits that are most esteemed in the society: mature wisdom, appeasement, reliance, not on force, but on agreement, and confidence in the effective operation of the long-run reciprocities of the social system. The task of the *khɔrɔ*, the most honourable and most arduous of all tasks, is successfully achieved only if the disputants can be guided towards reconciliation and acceptable compromises. Certainty—the idol of security set up by our aggressive society, the fetish worshipped by legalistic practitioners and the obsession impelling our courts to adjudicate upon conflicting rights according to strict law—is not a feature of the *khɔrɔ*. The *khɔrɔ* is oblivious of the fear that hard cases will make bad law, for it need not, as we do, steel itself against tenderness for the hardship of the unwitting offender, lest exceptions upset the certainty of the law and that elegant symmetry which, as we conceive, guarantees security. In

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cattle-dipping, quarantine regulations, and the reclamation of the reserves, have increased in recent years. Unless some compromise can be reached in regard to the prohibition of cutting down trees, all the Native industries will be stamped out. The change from wattle and daub to sun-dried bricks for constructing huts began before the forestry regulations and is now accelerated, fortunately without causing a major disturbance. Dipping is regarded as a sinister device for keeping down the number of cattle—the hurried driving to and from the dip and the lack of care of wounded cattle or of those in calf do in fact cause deaths, but the absence of milch cows, also attributed to dipping, is the result of overworking the cattle, their poor quality, and inadequate grazing land. Natives believe that dipping exists for the special benefit of dipping officials, who come as poor men, but are rich when they leave. Dipping and quarantine regulations, as well as grazing fees in the Crown Lands, have led to complications in transferring the cattle of the marriage exchanges, driven out customs incipiently accepted from the West, such as cattle posts and cattle racing on the day of the first fruits festival, and introduced the conception of fees for *hu fisa*, the care of cattle by others.

But one of the most unsuspected results is the growth of a reluctance, not merely to slaughter, but also to sell cattle. The evil of this tendency is incalculable, but it is an inevitable result of modern conditions. Sales are difficult, because of the restrictions on movement and the absence of markets; the need to sell or to slaughter is smaller than it was because money is available and agriculture less precarious; the emphasis upon material possessions and the liberation among Christians of cattle from the chain of cattle exchanges tends to imbue them with new values. The tendency is for them to become a standard of wealth rather than a means of subsistence or of facilitating marriage. There is a strong aversion even to slaughter the cattle that used to be killed in marriage negotiations, their place being taken by money and clothes. A strong incentive to slaughter cattle cannot easily be created, since it is not meat, but beer, with which one regales one's neighbours and maintains a reputation for liberality. Among the Lovedu the growing anti-economic conception of cattle has nothing to do with their alleged sacredness.

Western culture has presented itself with a formidable problem. Improvement of stock by way of pedigree bulls, the Lovedu have decisively rejected: they suspect that the Government will claim perhaps the calves, perhaps some other right of interference. They have also for similar reasons refused other aid, such as the introduction of a suitable grass.

Not all the great changes in agriculture have come from the European. The Shangana-Tonga introduced valley cultivation, which was subsequently stimulated by congestion on the hills and by the greater ease of manipulating the plough in the valleys than on the hillsides. With the plough, rejected in its early heavy form, but accepted later when it became lighter, a new set of reactions started. Crops and beer became more abundant; the old forms of co-operative work were transformed, and the effect of the absence in town of the men was minimized. But the plough is destroying the protective verges of fields, sweeping away the borders

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creating and maintaining the all-important social relationships and realignments in the social structure that arise from marriage. Cattle are not 'gods with the wet nose' as among Tswana, but they may be dedicated to the ancestor spirits.

The economy is largely a subsistence one. A man should have enough for his family's needs as well as to entertain friends and neighbours with beer to maintain his good name and reputation for liberality, and to fulfil his kinship obligations. But accumulation of goods is frowned upon: in any case, in the absence of markets or methods of preservation of the crops, an economic incentive is lacking. Payment for most services, even that of a doctor, is made in beer. Exchanges on the whole are usually not motivated by differential needs but by goodwill, the obligations of kinship, and the general emphasis upon long-run reciprocity; they are for the most part not business transactions but gift exchanges. Kin and neighbours co-operate in work parties for weeding, reaping, building. Helpers are honoured as workers (*vashumi*) and treated to beer at the end of the day, yet they cannot be said to receive any specific reward, for the gate-crashers (*vahobedi* or beggars), who join the party when it repairs to the home of the host for beer, drink calabash for calabash with the workers. In ploughing partnerships, in which each of the parties contributes his services or some commodity, there is complete disregard of equivalence between what is contributed by a partner and the service he is entitled to. Reciprocity operates through the instrumentality of economic goods, but it owes its significance as a moral force to the interdependences that arise from the social and political structure.

The society is patrilineal and marriage patrilocal, but cognates, agnates, and affines are not segregated into distinctive groups; each category overlaps to such an extent with the others, through cross-cousin marriage and other factors, that both structurally and functionally it is the bilateral kin-groups that are significant.

One of the basic features of the social system is the linking of brother and sister whereby the cattle (*munywalo*) coming in from the marriage of a sister are allocated to her brother to enable him to marry a wife. This cattle-linking of brother and sister is co-ordinated with cross-cousin marriage and an alignment of lineages into wife-providers and wife-receivers. That a man is expected to marry where his father has married or, more accurately, where his mother's marriage cattle have been used to establish a 'home', is the inevitable consequence, according to Lovedu conceptions, of the right of a sister to her cattle-linked brother's daughter as a daughter-in-law, who will cook and stamp for her and care for her in her old age. The arrangement implies that this girl should marry the son of the cattle-linked sister of her father, but should there be no such son her paternal aunt may nevertheless 'marry' her, in which case she will bear children by some person appointed by the aunt to act for her non-existent son or 'pick them up' as she wishes.

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Lobedu themselves. The society is remarkably egalitarian and there is no concentration of wealth in the hands of the ruling group. Nor would this be easy in a tribe in which the limited resources in property (in cattle) are used primarily for, and are constantly being converted into, marriage alliances.

Other distinctive features of the Lobedu are their marked agricultural bias; a fertility cult with sacred drums; masked dancing; ritual arrangements in ancestor worship (in the form of impersonation of the spirits, the predominance of beer offerings and the *phasa* rite of spurting water out of the mouth as an accompaniment to prayer) which link them more closely to the tribes to the north than to their southern Nguni and Sotho neighbours where the blood sacrifice and cattle cult are more clearly marked.

Agnatic Groupings

Despite the fact that they are ruled by a queen and that women can and do hold important political and religious positions the Lobedu are a patrilineal people in the sense that a man belongs to his father's lineage, property is inherited in the male line and marriage is patrilocal. The tribe is made up of a large number of different totemic groups, Lion, Elephant, Crocodile, Wild Pig, none of which, not even the royal Lobedu totem, is confined to the Lobedu tribe. All these totems are found in neighbouring tribes and many also in other parts of the Transvaal and elsewhere. A few groups have no totem (*motupo*) but designate themselves by their place of origin, e.g., *Mokhalaga*. Groups which have the same totem do not consider themselves related if they come from different places of origin. Elephant of Khalaga are thus unrelated to Elephant of Tsubye or Elephant of Thobolo. People sometimes swear by (*ana*) their totem and are supposed to but do not always abstain from eating it. The totemic name is useful only as a distinguishing mark; e.g., in divination the bones may indicate a person of the Elephant or Lion totem as responsible for illness or theft. Beyond this the *motupo* has little meaning and today many of the young people do not even use the term. The totemic group is not exogamous.

The lineage has no distinguishing name, the term *moloko* or

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their right to their lands. It is usual for people to 'beg' fields also in areas other than that in which they are living, partly to take advantage of diverse climatic conditions, partly because of land shortage; but their right to these is not as strong as to fields in their home district. Land shortage has not yet reached serious proportions owing to the fact that since the 1920's the tribe has been buying up sparsely populated Crown lands to the north. Grazing and the right to collect wood, thatching grass, wild fruits and plants for economic use are free to all, though herd-boys jealously guard good pastures in their own areas to which they feel they have first right.

Livestock takes the form chiefly of cattle and goats; fowls, still forbidden at the Capital, were introduced by the Tsonga; donkeys and pigs are a European innovation, the former being popular among Christians for use in ploughing and transport, the latter being kept largely by women for exchange purposes. Though of considerable economic importance cattle play little part in the diet of the people, being used mainly for ritual purposes and as bride-price. They move in a chain of marriage exchanges from one family to another, creating and maintaining social links and knitting together in preferred marriage the descendants of brothers and sisters. It was calculated in 1939 that bride-price accounted for 95 per cent of all transfers of cattle in the Lobedu tribe.[1] Cattle coming in as bride-price are not supposed to be used for any other purpose than marriage for, unlike the Zulu who kept large herds, constantly replenished in the old days by raids against neighbours, most Lobedu families do not possess cattle except for short periods of time.

Lobedu ideas of property and their attitude to its possession and accumulation are rather different from ours. The correct use of cattle in Lobedu eyes lies not in accumulation but in their investment in 'building a house', i.e., setting up a new social and economic unit of a wife and children. Surplus crops, similarly, are not accumulated but are generally consumed in a succession of after-harvest beer parties in honour of kin and affines which adds considerably to one's prestige. This, so often cited as evidence of wastefulness and lack of foresight is, in the absence of any really reliable termite- or pest-proof form of storage (which makes accumulation risky), a means of insur-

[1] Krige, J. D., 1939, p. 396.